

2008 Indiana Deer Season Summary



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General

The 2008 Indiana deer hunting season was comprised of four seasons: Early Archery (Oct. 1 to Nov. 30), Firearms (Nov. 15 to Nov. 30), Muzzleloader (Dec. 6-21), and Late Archery (Dec. 6 to Jan. 4). Additionally, there was a youth-only season Sept. 27-28 that was open to youth age 15 or younger who was accompanied by an adult at least 18 years old. The youth could take one additional antlerless deer during this special season.

The statewide archery bag limit was two deer. Hunters could take one deer per license for a total of either two antlerless deer or one antlered and one antlerless deer. A hunter could take only one antlered deer during all statewide seasons combined using archery, firearm, or muzzleloader licenses. This was the 12th year the crossbow was legal for hunting by non-handicapped hunters under an archery license. The crossbow was eligible for use only during the late archery season and could be used for deer of either sex.



Archers could harvest deer in designated urban zones that did not count towards any other statewide bag limit. Each extra urban zone deer required a separate extra archery license. The archery season in the urban deer zone opened two weeks prior to the opening of the early archery season (Sept. 15 to Nov. 30), and continued again into January (Dec. 6 to Jan. 4). Archers were allowed to harvest either four antlerless deer or three antlerless and one antlered deer during this period. Any deer harvested during this period were in addition to all other bag limits.

The bag limit during firearms season was one antlered deer, and the bag limit for the muzzleloader season was one either sex deer (maximum of one antlered deer harvested per hunter). A single firearms license was required to hunt with any or all shotgun, muzzleloader, rifle, or handgun during the firearms season, and a muzzleloader license (separate from the firearms license) was required to hunt during the muzzleloader season.

The resident deer license fee was \$24 and the nonresident fee was \$150. When an agricultural advantage could be gained, resident landowners who hunted on land they own were exempt from purchasing deer licenses, as were lessees.

Special public hunts were held at Muscatatuck and Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuges, and Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center.

Bonus Antlerless Permits

An unlimited number of bonus antlerless permits were available at every deer license vendor statewide, and each permit could be used in any county. County bag limits ranged from A to 8 (Figure 1). Permits were available to both resident and non-resident hunters.

Each permit was valid for one antlerless deer, and hunters were allowed to take as many bonus antlerless deer as desired, as long as the county antlerless bag limits were observed.

Bonus antlerless permits cost \$24 and \$150 for the first permit for residents and nonresidents, respectively. The second and each additional permit was \$15 for residents and \$24 for nonresidents. Bonus antlerless permits could be used during all deer hunting seasons except for “A”-designated counties, where the license could only be used during the last four days of the firearms season (Nov. 27 to Nov. 30) plus the late archery and muzzleloader seasons.



Figure 1. Antlerless deer bag limits in 2008.

Number of Deer Harvested

A total of 129,748 deer were legally harvested in Indiana during the 2008 season (Figure 2).

This harvest was 4% higher than the 124,427 deer harvested during the 2007 season. The antlered deer harvest of 50,845 represented a nearly 3% increase from the 49,375 harvested last year. The antlerless harvest of 78,903 was 5% more than the 75,052 harvested in 2007. In 2008, the harvest for total deer and antlerless deer ranks as the highest reported kill for each category in history. The antlered harvest ranks third all-time.

Approximately 2.59 million deer have been legally harvested during the past 57 deer hunting seasons in Indiana.

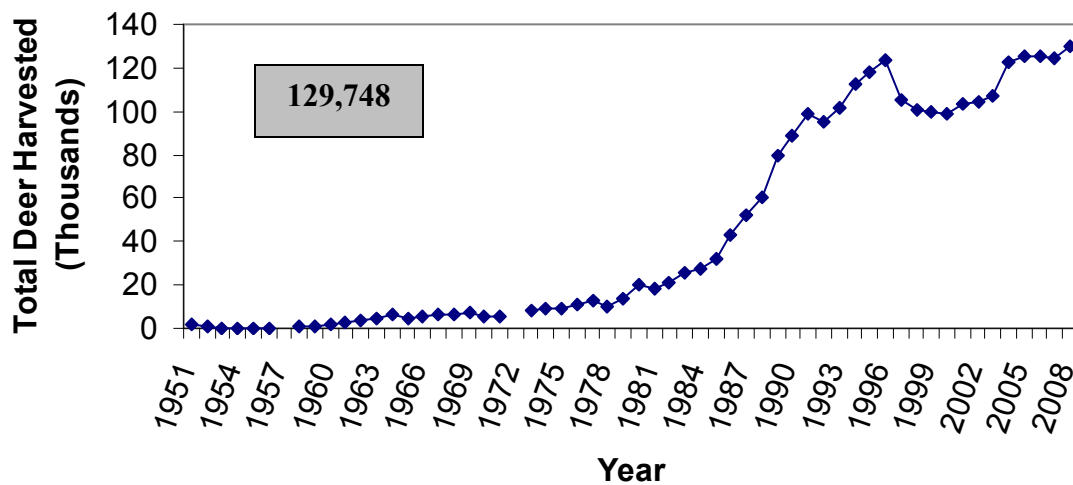


Figure 2. The number of deer harvested in Indiana deer hunting seasons 1951-2008.

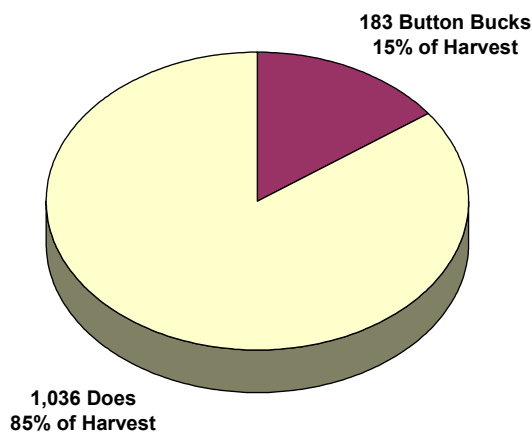


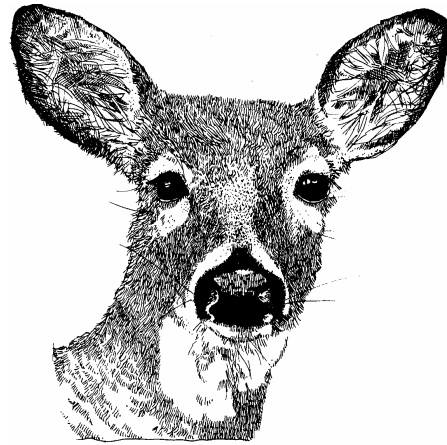
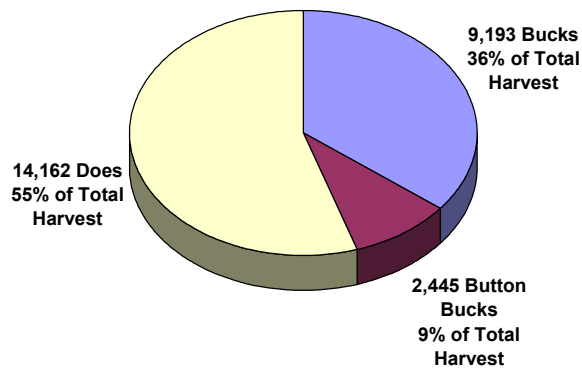
Figure 3. 2008 Youth Season harvest composition.

The hunting season began with urban deer zones (Sept. 15) followed by a youth only weekend (Sept. 27-28). This season was created in 2006 and allowed youths 15 years and younger to harvest one antlerless deer. A total of 1,219 deer were harvested in 2008 during this season, up 2% from the 1,194 from 2007. This season resulted in 1% of the total harvest (Table 1). Only 15% of the harvest was comprised of button bucks (Figure 3).

The early archery season harvest (including the early Urban Deer Zones) of 25,800 deer comprised 20% of the total harvest and was 3% more than the 25,084 harvested in 2007 (Table 1). The late archery season comprised 1% of the total harvest, similar to the 2007 season. The combined archery seasons yielded 26,921 deer, an increase of 1% from the 26,643 harvested in 2007. Antlerless deer comprised 65% of the total archery harvest, an increase from the 62.5% from 2007. Antlerless harvest in early archery season was 64%, while in late archery it was 81% (Figure 4). Does made up 55% of the total harvest in early archery season and nearly 70% of the harvest in late archery season.



A.



B.

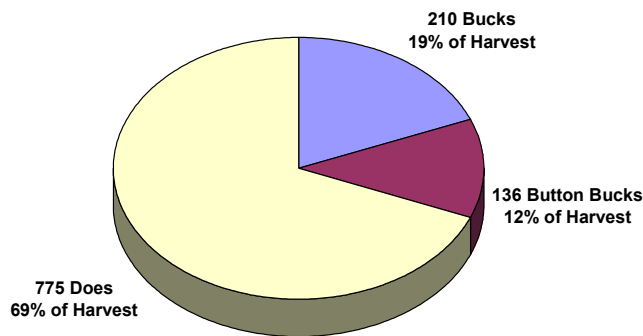


Figure 4. A. Early Archery harvest and B. Late Archery harvest composition in 2008

Table 1. Number of deer harvested in each segment of the 2008 Indiana deer hunting season. Percent of total harvest in parentheses (totals may not be exactly 100 due to rounding).

Season	Number of deer harvested		
	Antlered	Antlerless	Total
Youth season* (27-28 Sept)	0	1,219 (2)	1,219 (1)
Early Archery** (1 Oct - 30 Nov)	9,193 (18)	16,607 (21)	25,800 (20)
Firearms (15-30 Nov)	38,324 (75)	48,130 (61)	86,454 (67)
Muzzleloader (6-21 Dec)	3,107 (6)	12,047 (15)	15,154 (12)
Late Archery (6 Dec - 4 Jan)	210 (1)	911 (1)	1,121 (1)
Totals	50,834	78,914	129,748

*Antlerless deer season only

**Includes the early Urban Deer Zone Starting on 15 September

The firearms season harvest of 86,454 deer was an increase of over 7% from the 80,662 deer harvested in 2007 and comprised 67% of the total harvest (Table 1). The antlerless harvest (48,130) and antlered harvest (38,324) for this season both eclipsed the 2007 harvest numbers for antlerless (44,524) and antlered (36,138) deer. Antlered deer made up over half of the total harvest on the opening weekend, while antlerless deer outnumbered antlered deer during the remaining 14 days of the season (Table 2). Due to a winter storm during the opening weekend of firearms season, only 36% of the total firearm season harvest occurred during opening weekend (Nov. 15-16), down from 48% in 2007. Opening weekend contributed to 24% of the statewide total harvest for all seasons, which is 8 percentage points lower than opening weekend harvest from 2007. Antlerless deer comprised 56% (82% of which were does) of the firearm season harvest (Figure 5).

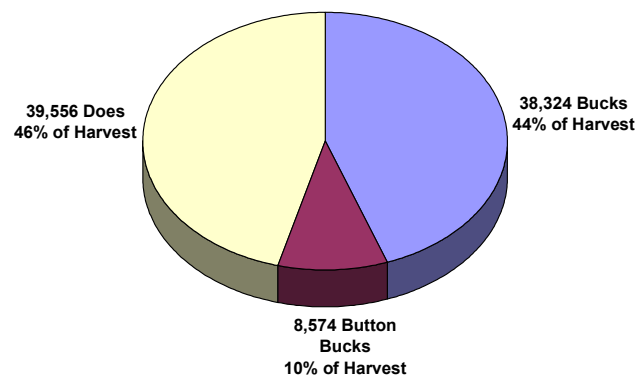


Figure 5. 2008 Firearms season harvest composition

Table 2. Number of deer harvested on each day of the 2008 Indiana firearm season (includes deer taken by bow, shotgun, pistol, rifle, and muzzleloader.

Date	Day	Antlered		Antlerless		Total	
		N	Daily %	N	Daily %	N	Total %
15 November	Sat	10,261	59	7,157	41	17,418	20
16 November	Sun	7,429	54	6,317	46	13,746	16
17 November	Mon	2,409	49	2,536	51	4,945	6
18 November	Tue	2,013	46	2,353	54	4,366	5
19 November	Wed	1,477	44	1,894	56	3,371	4
20 November	Thu	1,237	43	1,644	57	2,881	3
21 November	Fri	1,409	42	1,914	58	3,323	4
22 November	Sat	3,198	38	5,119	62	8,317	10
23 November	Sun	2,190	36	3,866	64	6,056	7
24 November	Mon	483	36	864	64	1,347	2
25 November	Tue	508	31	1,148	69	1,656	2
26 November	Wed	783	34	1,543	66	2,326	3
27 November	Thu	1,227	32	2,576	68	3,803	4
28 November	Fri	1,423	32	3,070	68	4,493	5
29 November	Sat	1,578	29	3,924	71	5,502	6
30 November	Sun	904	29	2,207	71	3,111	4
Totals*		38,529		48,132		86,661	100

* Totals differ from those in previous table because date of harvest is not known for some registered deer and this table includes deer from both the firearms season and the last 16 days of the early archery season.

The muzzleloader season harvest of 15,154 comprised 12% of the total harvest, similar to last year (Table 1). This year's muzzleloader harvest was nearly 5% lower than the 2007 muzzleloader harvest (15,928). As in years past, a large percentage of the deer harvested during the muzzleloader season were antlerless (80%) (Figure 6).

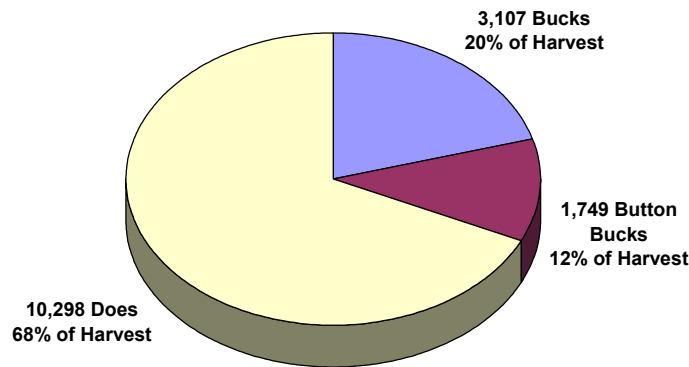


Figure 6. 2008 Muzzleloader season harvest composition

Harvest by Equipment Type

Six types of equipment were legal for hunting deer during 2008: bows, shotguns, muzzleloaders, handguns, crossbows, and rifles. Rifle cartridges were restricted to .357 diameter or larger bullet, and case length must be between 1.16 and 1.625 inches. These types of equipment accounted for 20%, 53%, 23%, 2%, 1%, and 1% of the total deer harvest, respectively (Figure 7).

Shotgun harvest increased 2 percentage points from 2007. Harvest by muzzleloader and bow decreased 2 and 1 percentage points from 2007 (Table 3). Only 4% of the harvest is made up of the remaining three equipment choices. The total crossbow harvest for the year, including deer taken on disabled hunter crossbow permits, was 827 animals compared with the 763 harvested in 2007.

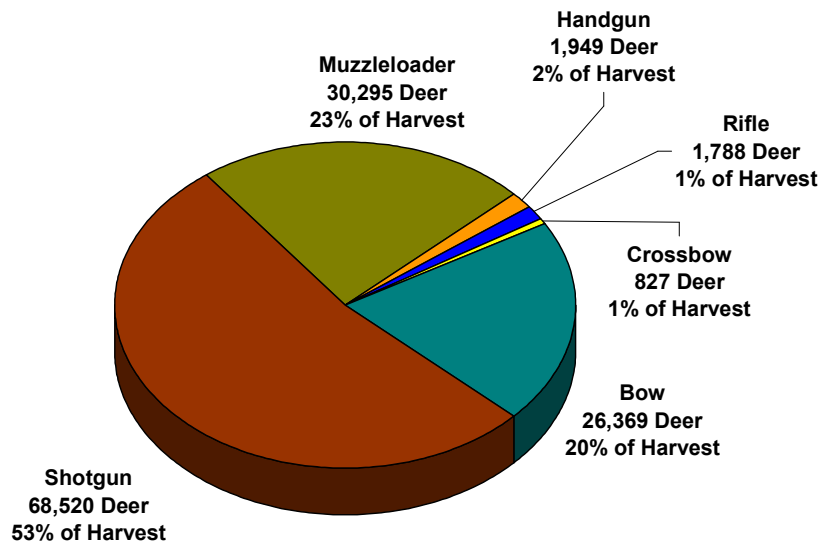


Figure 7. 2008 harvest by equipment type in Indiana

During the late archery season, the crossbow harvest was 159 deer, compared with 154 in 2007 and 30 in 2006 (Table 3). Harvest with rifles increased this year by 49% compared to 2007, the initial year they could be used. However, as there are no check boxes for rifles on the current deer check harvest forms, real results may be higher than reported.

Table 3. Number of deer harvested by type of legal hunting equipment during the 2003-2008 seasons. Approximate percent of total harvest shown in parentheses.

Equipment type	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Bow*	20,748 (19)	21,498 (18)	23,692 (19)	26,723 (21)	26,187 (21)	26,369 (20)
Shotgun	61,674 (58)	71,251 (58)	70,022 (56)	66,304 (53)	63,919 (51)	68,520 (53)
Muzzleloader	22,724 (21)	28,182 (23)	29,686 (24)	30,247 (24)	30,740 (25)	30,295 (23)
Handgun	1,425 (1)	1,620 (1)	1,606 (1)	1,386 (1)	1,615 (1)	1,949 (2)
Rifle	x	x	x	x	1,203 (1)	1,788 (1)
Crossbow						
Disabled	348 (0)	405(0)	427(0)	591 (0)	609 (0)	668 (1)
Late archery	67 (0)	102 (0)	93 (0)	130 (0)	154 (0)	159 (0)
Totals	106,986	123,058	125,526	124,562	124,427	129,748

* Crossbow harvest is not included in bow harvest. Values within this table do not exactly equal those tallied by season (page 3) due to the fact that multiple equipment types can be used during the firearm season. Muzzleloaders may also be used during both the firearm and muzzleloader season. Additionally, differences arise due to the different methods required to analyze data when either the equipment or the season is unknown.

Harvest by License Status

Licensed resident hunters (lifetime, resident, and youth license holders) accounted for over 81% of the total deer harvest (Table 4). Licensed nonresident hunters harvested nearly 2% of the total harvest. Hunters with a regular yearly deer hunting license (resident plus non-resident) took only 43% of the total deer harvest; hunters not paying the full yearly price (i.e. lifetime license holders, youth license holders, landowners/tenants, and military personnel) took nearly 57% of the total harvest. Landowners and lessees who hunted on their own land without a license and military personnel on official leave status accounted for almost 17% of the total deer harvest. Of the deer harvested by license-exempt hunters, nearly 99% were taken by landowners/tenants while only 1% by military personnel on leave.

Table 4. Harvest distribution of deer by license type during 2008 hunting season.

License Status	Deer Harvested	Percent of Harvest
Resident	53,931	41.57
Lifetime	39,648	30.56
Land Owner	21,678	16.71
Youth	11,804	9.10
Nonresident	2,468	1.90
Military	219	0.17
Total	129,748	100.0



Harvest Age and Sex Structure

The age and sex structure of the 2008 deer harvest was 39% adult males (antlered bucks), 36% adult females, 11% male fawns (button bucks), and 15% female fawns (Table 5). These percentages are nearly identical to the harvest in 2007. About 40% of the antlered bucks and 38% of the adult does harvested during 2008 were yearlings (1.5 years old).

Table 5. Sex and age structure of the Indiana deer harvest during 1987-2008, as determined from mandatory check stations.

Year	Adults		Fawns		Total
	Males (%)	Females (%)	Males (%)	Females (%)	
1987	29,530 (57)	11,139 (21)	6,164 (12)	4,945 (10)	51,778
1988	34,358 (57)	13,170 (22)	7,050 (12)	5,656 (10)	60,234
1989	40,503 (51)	19,464 (24)	10,737 (14)	8,614 (11)	79,318
1990	43,080 (48)	23,680 (27)	12,373 (14)	9,630 (11)	88,763
1991	41,593 (42)	31,211 (32)	14,626 (15)	11,253 (11)	98,683
1992	43,508 (46)	25,387 (27)	14,262 (15)	12,157 (13)*	95,314
1993	44,424 (44)	27,704 (27)	14,751 (15)	14,335 (14)*	101,214
1994	50,812 (45)	32,466 (29)	15,487 (14)	13,651 (12)*	112,416
1995	47,098 (40)	40,946 (35)	16,398 (14)	13,287 (11)*	117,729
1996	47,315 (38)	39,913 (32)	17,307 (14)	18,551 (15)*	123,086
1997	42,537 (41)	35,163 (34)	14,039 (13)	13,198 (12)*	104,937
1998	44,955 (45)	30,711 (31)	12,257 (12)	12,538 (12)*	100,461
1999	46,371 (46)	30,474 (31)	11,645 (12)	11,129 (11)*	99,618
2000	44,621 (45)	31,986 (32)	11,072 (11)	11,046 (11)*	98,725
2001	48,357 (47)	31,806 (31)	11,230 (11)	11,770 (11)*	103,163
2002	47,177 (45)	35,357 (34)	11,291 (11)	10,603 (10)*	104,428
2003	49,533 (46)	36,303 (34)	10,262 (10)	10,887 (10)*	106,986
2004	54,743 (44)	41,749 (34)	12,501 (10)	14,065 (11)*	123,058
2005	52,488 (42)	44,286 (35)	13,030 (10)	15,722 (13)*	125,526
2006	49,097 (39)	45,257 (36)	13,688 (11)	17,339 (14)*	125,381
2007	49,375 (40)	44,514 (36)	13,313 (11)	17,225 (14)*	124,427
2008	50,845 (39)	46,666 (36)	13,083 (11)	19,154 (15)*	129,748

* Number of adult and fawn females is projected from the % fawns of all females aged at the biological check stations (not from the ratio of fawn doe to fawn bucks in the total deer harvest).

Distribution of the Harvest

The number of deer harvested in individual counties ranged from 130 in Tipton County to 3,672 in Steuben County (Table 6). Harvest exceeded 1,000 deer in 61 counties; 2,000 deer in 16 counties; and 3,000 deer in four counties. The antlered buck harvest exceeded 1,000 in five counties (similar to 2007), while the antlerless harvest exceeded 1,000 deer in 29 counties compared with 25 in 2007. Antlerless deer comprised at least 50% of the total harvest in 88 of the state's 92 counties in 2007 compared with 87 counties in 2006. The counties with the highest harvests were Steuben, Kosciusko, Noble, Marshall, Switzerland, Franklin, Parke, LaGrange, Harrison, and Dearborn. The counties with the lowest harvests were Tipton, Benton, Hancock, Marion, Blackford, Rush, Clinton, Shelby, Boone, and Henry.

Table 6. Number of deer harvested in each Indiana county during 2008 (after adjustment for unknowns).

County	<u>Number Harvested</u>			County	<u>Number Harvested</u>		
	Antlered	Antlerless	Total		Antlered	Antlerless	Total
Adams	207	312	519	Lawrence	779	1,127	1,905
Allen	725	996	1,721	Madison	231	382	613
Bartholomew	540	761	1,301	Marion	155	136	290
Benton	82	55	137	Marshall	1,100	1,924	3,024
Blackford	136	171	308	Martin	532	1,055	1,587
Boone	201	218	419	Miami	608	797	1,405
Brown	732	1,164	1,895	Monroe	597	801	1,398
Carroll	432	500	931	Montgomery	325	498	823
Cass	626	886	1,511	Morgan	498	678	1,176
Clark	660	1,034	1,694	Newton	543	615	1,158
Clay	428	573	1,001	Noble	1,050	2,180	3,229
Clinton	158	192	349	Ohio	310	708	1,018
Crawford	720	1,047	1,767	Orange	770	1,164	1,934
Daviess	434	727	1,161	Owen	734	950	1,684
Dearborn	851	1,717	2,568	Parke	1,036	1,769	2,804
Decatur	297	366	663	Perry	716	1,095	1,811
De Kalb	934	1,502	2,437	Pike	616	843	1,459
Delaware	316	439	756	Porter	581	810	1,391
Dubois	643	1,120	1,763	Posey	648	932	1,580
Elkhart	584	962	1,546	Pulaski	693	894	1,588
Fayette	287	425	712	Putnam	791	1,037	1,828
Floyd	244	377	621	Randolph	245	270	515
Fountain	552	890	1,442	Ripley	723	955	1,678
Franklin	948	1,905	2,852	Rush	160	151	312
Fulton	734	1,321	2,055	St. Joseph	592	858	1,450
Gibson	628	959	1,588	Scott	378	609	987
Grant	321	471	791	Shelby	160	218	378
Greene	947	1,206	2,153	Spencer	558	816	1,374
Hamilton	227	273	500	Starke	700	1,026	1,727
Hancock	121	158	278	Steuben	1,214	2,458	3,672
Harrison	973	1,728	2,701	Sullivan	745	904	1,648
Hendricks	292	358	650	Switzerland	917	2,038	2,955
Henry	202	289	491	Tippecanoe	521	646	1,167
Howard	173	322	496	Tipton	68	62	130
Huntington	500	725	1,226	Union	226	295	521
Jackson	798	1,190	1,988	Vanderburgh	300	475	775
Jasper	645	986	1,631	Vermillion	536	671	1,207
Jay	302	604	906	Vigo	640	821	1,462
Jefferson	791	1,385	2,176	Wabash	727	1,025	1,752
Jennings	766	1,108	1,874	Warren	533	751	1,284
Johnson	248	379	628	Warrick	666	860	1,526
Knox	459	478	936	Washington	911	1,606	2,517
Kosciusko	1,177	2,185	3,362	Wayne	385	516	901
Lagrange	799	1,935	2,733	Wells	245	296	540
Lake	555	633	1,188	White	474	755	1,229
La Porte	974	1,553	2,527	Whitley	540	844	1,384

* Totals may be off +/- 1 due to rounding during partitioning of harvested deer of unknown sex or county.

Disease Monitoring

Results from the Division of Fish and Wildlife's Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) sampling have been completed, and tests failed to detect CWD in 862 deer during the 2008 year.

Since 2002, Division of Fish and Wildlife employees have been collecting CWD samples from hunter harvested deer during the opening weekend of the firearms season. Beginning in 2007, these efforts were supplemented with the addition of collecting road-killed samples throughout the year, which is continued today. CWD has not been detected in over 10,000 deer during this monitoring period.

CWD is one of a group of diseases called Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE's). Other examples of TSE's include scrapie in sheep and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in humans. The agents of CWD are called prions which are abnormal, protease-resistant forms of cellular proteins normally synthesized in the central nervous system and lymphoid tissues. Prions that cause CWD are highly resistant to heat or disinfectant, and can be transferred to other deer through direct or indirect contact. No study has ever proven that CWD is transmissible to humans.

Additionally, fewer reports were received this year than the previous two for cases of Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD). Overall deer loss is believed to be much less than the previous two years. A map of the counties reporting and testing positive for EHD can be seen in Figure 8.

For more information on deer health, visit www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild.

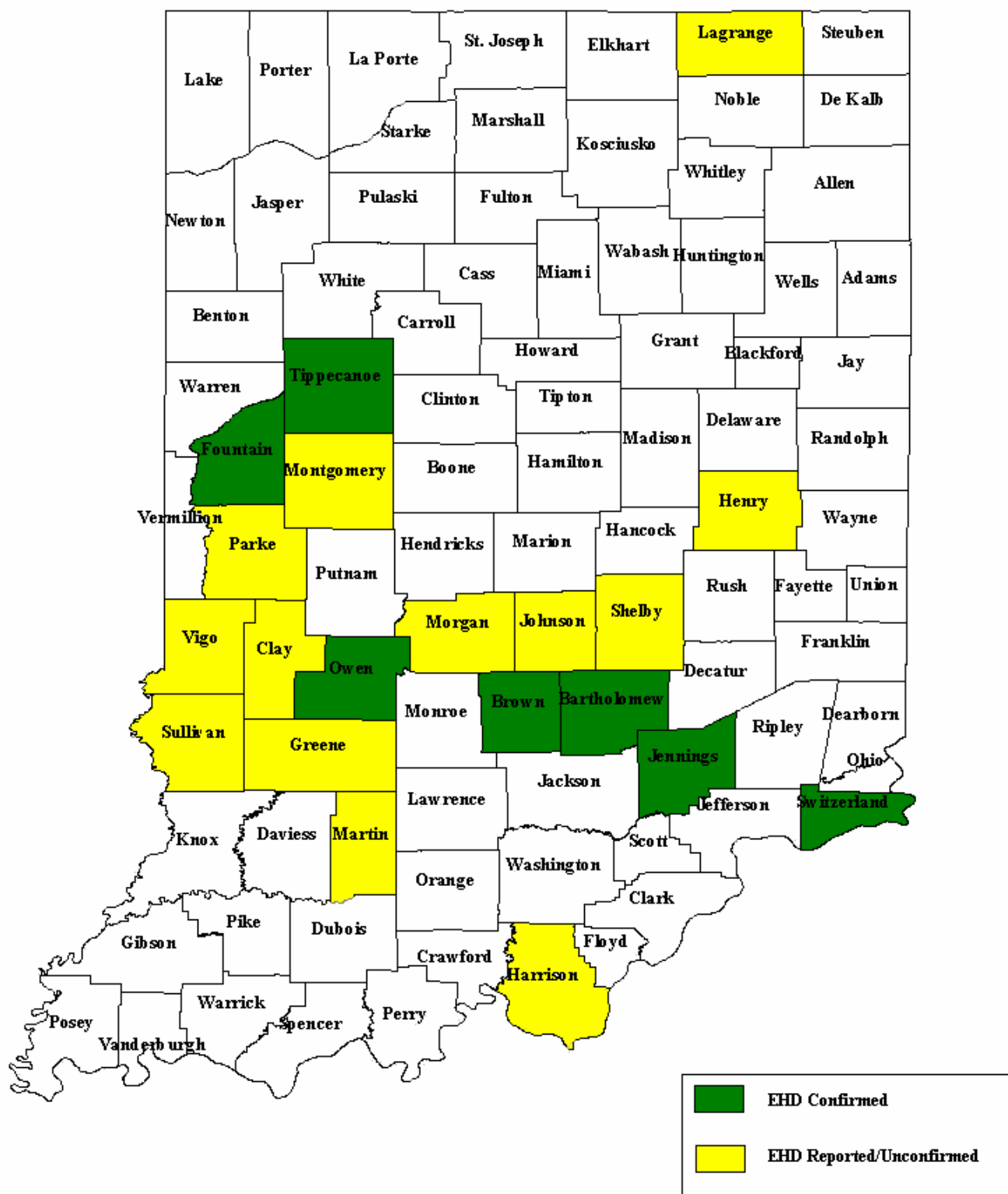


Figure 8. 2008 Status of Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease in Indiana